

Brethren Evangelist

"I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life."—Jesus

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The Bump of Presumption

A writer in an exchange says that he saw two hundred persons deliberately walk under a scaffolding on Broadway one afternoon, notwithstanding two immense signs blocked half the sidewalk, and bore the warning: "Danger above." Of the two hundred there was not one who did not read the sign, and then look up curiously at the threatening mass of loose masonry and boards overhead as he or she passed beneath.

This illustrates a peculiar trait of human nature which crops out in moral and spiritual directions as well as in the material. The element of danger possesses a fascinating charm which appears to be irresistible to many minds. The sportman who hunts wild beasts in the jungle is drawn on by the excitement which is inseparable from peril. The gambler, the speculator, yields to the same fascination. It compensates the mountain climber and the ocean voyager for all his toils. The spice of danger lends charm to the calling of the soldier, and makes him long for the excitement of battle instead of the monotony and ennui of peaceful inaction.

In spiritual matters the same characteristic of our human nature leads men to the borders of presumption, and often far beyond. Men have defied the claims of the moral law, and blasphemed God, out of mere bravado. They learn by experience that the way of the transgressor is hard, that infraction of law brings penalty, nevertheless they venture again and again, either until habit is fixed and transgression becomes second nature, or until stern experience of chastisement teaches some measure of wholesome wisdom. "I'll take the chances" is spoken innumerable times beneath the breath, often in the hearing of the ears, so blatant sometimes becomes folly and madness. The fool who yields to appetite, who fondles a besetting sin, who disobeys a command of the moral law, who rejects the claims of the Gospel, these and many others of a like stripe show no better reason, state no saner argument, than this one: "I'll take the chances."

There is only one remedy for this sort—stripes. Solomon said that this was the remedy for fools, and that remarkable old voluptuary illustrated it in his own career before he died disgraced. Yes, it is the inexorable and most beneficent law of the universe, that transgression of any natural, moral, or spiritual law is inevitably followed by its adequate, full, and logical penalty.

Sins like curses come home to roost.

We always pay the full value of every transgression we buy.

When payment is delayed, compound interest is often if not always piled upon the principal.

Many a fortune is but the grave of reputation, or a splen-

did monument on which to inscribe the epitaph of departed Peace.

The history of many a lifetime is merely a record of debts flippantly made and painfully paid.

At the bottom of all this is written the transgression of some law, or of many.

Penalty is nature's method and God's method, (for God made nature) of teaching obedience to fools, according to the saying that experience is a dear school, but fools will learn in no other. Now there is nothing in the universe which has so much patience and perseverance as penalty. The sinner goes slambang and slapdash on his chosen road of disobedience, and Penalty follows quietly after him, assessing the damages all the way, and this process just keeps right on for a year, a decade, a lifetime, a thousand years, ten thousand, a million, or longer, if it takes longer, to check that fool, and bring him back to the paths of obedience and righteousness. That song of his, "I'll take the chances," dies out after awhile. It's a most tiresome thing in the sequel. It is a most unprofitable howl. The most obstinate rebellion must inevitably wear itself out somewhere along in the eternities.

Wisdom says: Make no debts, and then you will have none to pay. Invest your life in something that will pay comfortable dividends. Take no foolish chances where there are so many profitable certainties.

"Keep Cool"—If You Can

The last days of June and the first days of July 1901 will be long remembered thru out the United States as days of extreme heat. There have been many deaths and many more prostrations as a direct result of the heat which has been not oppressive only but in many places unendurable for some people at least. At such times it becomes one to be exceedingly careful both as to diet and exercise.

The hot weather has not been without its effect on this office. Not that we or any of the employees in the office have suffered materially from the hot weather. Ashland College Campus as a place to keep "cool" is superior to many summer resorts, but the busy employees of the office and the editor find little time to revel in its cooling shade. The effect of the hot weather is seen in the lack of original copy for the paper. Church news has kept up remarkably well and this speaks praise for our pastors. If this issue of the paper is lacking in original contributions, the more than usual amount of church news compensates for what it lacks in regularly contributed articles. Brethren, do not forget the EVANGELIST during these warm days. Your help is specially needed now. A few sermons for publication would be most welcome just at this time. Brother pastor, can you spare one?